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SECURITY INFORMATION  
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

# REPORT

# INFORMATION REPORT

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**CONFIDENTIAL**

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SUBJECT The Church, Monuments, and Cemeteries in  
Tallinn

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## The Church

1. In general, fewer people go to church in Estonia now than in the past, but on holidays, especially Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve, the churches are filled to overflowing, and crowds of people stand outside and listen to the services through the open doors.
2. Officially, there is freedom of religion in Estonia, but the publication of notices in the newspapers giving dates and times of church services and names of preachers is forbidden. Furthermore, if a school pupil goes to confirmation, this is followed by the cancellation of his stipend or grant; and, if a university student has a church wedding or has his child baptized, he also loses his grant.
3. The churches must pay very high land rent, according to the extent of the area they occupy, and the churches also pay for electricity according to a specially high tariff.
4. In Tallinn, the bishopric administration offices in the Toom Church (the old church in the Toompea) have been removed from their former premises and are now housed in a side-room of the Toom Church. The office of Kaarli Church has been removed from the Church House near Toompea, and is now in rented rooms on Tatari t. The offices of the "Trustee in the Estonian SSR of the Council for Religious Cults subordinated to the Council of Ministers of the USSR" is located on Kevade t. The Trustee is pastor Kivi who, it is said, "receives instructions from Stalin on how to pray to God in the Marxist way". 1/

## Public monuments

5. During 1949-50, monuments have been erected in Tallinn to Lenin (on the Lenin allee, which goes from Kesklinna t. towards the former Synagogue and ends at Maakri t.); to Stalin, opposite the Baltic Railway Station, where the site was first cleared of all trees; and to Kalinin, on the

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road from the Kopli railway to Tornide Valjak (Square). These all have high granite plinths and figures of cast bronze, twice life size. They are guarded by armed militia night and day, and the sites are floodlighted at night. The building of a monument to Kingisepp has been started on the slope of Harju hill, and a bust of Lauristin has been placed on a small granite stand in the gardens of Toompea loss (castle). 2/

6. In 1949, the memorial to Estonian school teachers and pupils who were killed in the War of Independence was dismantled. The mausoleum at the Military Cemetery was demolished in 1950, and the graves and monuments to Generals Podder and Unt have also been destroyed. The graves of other Estonian officers in the military cemetery have been levelled, and the line of propellers above the graves of air force pilots has also been razed to the ground. It is not known whether the whole of Kopli Cemetery is also to be levelled, but a part of it has already been laid flat, and all the stone monuments and crosses have been demolished. It is said that a park is to be made on the site.
7. The cemeteries are no longer under ecclesiastical administration but are subordinate to the "Welfare Trust", which also provides (or hires) cars or carts for the transport of the dead.

Comment:

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In 1950, the ancient coat of arms of Tallinn and the Danebrog coat of arms were removed from the walls of Tallinn Town Hall, and ancient paintings from the front of the Town Hall and in the vestibule were removed and replaced by slogans.

1/ Comment:

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These are all Lutheran churches.

2/ Comment:

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Kingisepp was one of the leaders of the abortive Communist attempt on 1 December 1924 who was captured during street fighting, tried, condemned to death, and shot. Lauristin was an Estonian Communist, one of the prominent Fifth Columnists in 1940, who lost his life in 1941.

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